

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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2013 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release #40 **Summer Announcement #36, District 1 Commercial Fishing Period** Districts Affected: Lower Yukon Area

The Pilot Station sonar cumulative passage estimate of approximately 86,000 Chinook salmon through July 2 is well below the historical average of 121,000 for this date. Conversely, the Pilot Station sonar summer chum salmon passage estimate is approximately 2.0 million fish which is well above the median of 1.2 million for this date. Poor Chinook salmon run sizes in recent years warrant continued caution as the 2013 run progresses.

Under new regulations adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in 2013, the department may by emergency order authority allow the use of gillnets of 5 ½-inch or smaller mesh size not exceeding 30 meshes in depth as commercial gear. This new gear option is intended to allow for additional summer chum directed commercial fishing opportunity while reducing the incidental harvest of Chinook salmon.

The preliminary commercial harvest for the first commercial gillnet period with this new gear in District 1 which occurred Tuesday, July 2, is approximately 17,000 summer chum salmon with a reported 22 Chinook salmon caught but not sold. Fishermen are reminded to report their incidental harvest of Chinook salmon when delivering. Chinook salmon caught but not sold must be reported on fish tickets.

Based on the abundance of summer chum salmon and consistent with these new regulations, this announcement opens one commercial fishing period in District 1.

District 1 Commercial Gillnet (South Mouth Only): Commercial salmon fishing in District 1 will be open from 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 3, until 12:00 midnight Wednesday, July 3. This will be a 6-hour commercial fishing period with gillnets restricted to 5 ½-inch or smaller mesh size and not exceeding 30 meshes in depth to target summer chum salmon.

Based on current assessment information, the area open to commercial fishing is being limited to only a portion of District 1 in which the incidental harvest rate of Chinook salmon is anticipated to be low. The portion open to commercial fishing will be the South Mouth area down river of the lower point of Head of Passes to Chris Point within District 1. Both locations are identified by ADF&G regulatory markers. The area open to commercial fishing includes Black River, Kwiguk Pass, and coastal waters from the Black River to one mile north of Kwiguk Pass. Middle and North Mouth and passes such as Aproka and Bugomowik, north of the mainstem South Mouth are closed to commercial fishing.

The sale of Chinook salmon is prohibited. Therefore, commercial gillnet fishermen can release live Chinook salmon or use them for subsistence purposes. Chinook salmon caught but not sold must be reported on fish tickets.

Fishermen in District 1 should stand by for short notice news releases on VHF and radio regarding the salmon fishing schedule.

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADFG office in Emmonak at 949-1320 or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks at 456-0418 or in Emmonak at 949-1825.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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